CLAIMS

1. A method for processing an overloaded key on a mobile device, said method comprising:

receiving a key press of the overloaded key to be processed from a buffer;

determining whether the function of the overloaded key has switched; and

clearing any subsequent overloaded key presses of the overloaded key from the buffer when said determining determines that the function of the overloaded key has switched.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said method further comprises:

setting a pause period for the overloaded key when said determining determines that the function of the overloaded key has switched so that subsequent presses of the overloaded key are ignored during the pause period.

3. A method as recited in claim 2, wherein said method comprises:

determining whether the overload key press occurred during the pause period; and

processing the overloaded key press when said determining determines that the function of the overloaded key has not switched and said determining determines that the overloaded key press did not occur during the pause period.

4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said determining whether the function of the overload key has switched comprises determining whether the function of the overloaded key has transitioned from a first function to a second function since its last key press.

5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the overloaded key is a Clear/Back key that supports a clear function and a back function.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the overloaded key is a Back/Exit key that supports a back function and an exit function.

7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the overloaded key is a Clear/Back/Exit key that supports a clear function, a back function and an exit function.

8. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the mobile device is a personal digital assistant or a cellular phone.

9. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the mobile device is a two-way mobile communication device having limited input keys, one of the input keys being the overloaded key.

10. A method of processing a Clear/Back key on a computing device having a display, said method comprising:

(a) displaying user entered text in a text entry screen on the display of the computing device;

(b) displaying a cursor at the end of the user entered text on the display of the computing device;

(c) receiving a Clear/Back key press;

(d) determining whether at least one character of the user entered text remains backwards from the cursor;

(e) deleting the character immediately backwards from the cursor when said determining (d) determines that at least one character of the user entered text remains backwards from the cursor;

(f) determining whether said deleting has caused no more characters of the user entered text to remain;

(g) setting a timestamp when said determining (f) determines that said deleting has caused no more characters of the user entered text to remain;

(h) determining whether a predetermined amount of time has passed since the timestamp was set with respect to a previous Clear/Back key press when said determining (d) determines that no characters of the user entered text remain backwards from the cursor;

(i) ignoring the Clear/Back key press when said determining (h) determines that the predetermined amount of time has not yet passed since the timestamp was set; and

(j) returning back to a prior screen when said determining (h) determines that the predetermined amount of time has passed since the timestamp was set.

11. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein said method further comprises:

(k) resetting the timestamp when said determining (h) determines that the predetermined amount of time has not yet passed since the timestamp was set with respect to a previous Clear/Back key press.

12. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the computing device is a mobile device.

13. A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the mobile device is a personal digital assistant or a cellular phone.

14. A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the mobile device is a two-way mobile communication device having limited input keys, one of the input keys being the Clear/Back key.

15. A method of processing a Back/Exit key on a computing device having a display, said method comprising:

(a) receiving a Back/Exit key press while operating in a first application mode on the computing device;

(b) determining whether a home screen is presently being displayed on the display;

(c) returning to display of a prior screen on the display when said determining (b) determines that the home screen is not presently being displayed;

(d) determining whether the prior screen is the home screen;

(e) storing a time indication when said returning (c) displays the prior screen if said determining (d) determines that the prior screen is the home screen;

(f) determining whether the home screen has been displayed for at least a predetermined amount of time based on the stored time indication when said determining (b) determines that the home screen is presently being displayed;

(g) ignoring the Back/Exit key press when said determining (f) determines that the home screen has not been displayed for at least the predetermined amount of time; and

(h) exiting the first application mode when said determining (f) determines that the home screen has been displayed for at least the predetermined amount of time.

16. A method as recited in claim 15, wherein the first application mode pertains to a network browser application mode.

17. A method as recited in claim 15, wherein the computing device is a mobile device.

18. A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the mobile device is a personal digital assistant or a cellular phone.

19. A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the mobile device is a two-way mobile communication device having limited input keys, one of the input keys being the Back/Exit key.

20. A computer readable medium including at least computer program code for processing an overloaded key on a mobile device, said computer readable medium comprising:

computer program code for receiving a key press of the overloaded key to be processed from a buffer;

computer program code for determining whether the function of the overloaded key has just switched; and

computer program code for clearing any subsequent overloaded key presses of the overloaded key from the buffer when said computer program code for determining determines that the function of the overloaded key has just switched.

21. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 20, wherein said computer readable medium further comprises:

computer program code for setting a pause period for the overloaded key when said computer program code for determining determines that the function of the overloaded key has just switched so that subsequent presses of the overloaded key are ignored during the pause period.

22. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 21, wherein said computer readable medium comprises:

computer program code for determining whether the overload key press occurred during the pause period; and

computer program code for processing the overloaded key press when said computer program code for determining determines that the function of the overloaded key has not just switched and said computer program code for determining determines that the overloaded key press did not occur during the pause period.

23. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 22, wherein the mobile device is a two-way mobile communication device having limited input keys, one of the input keys being the overloaded key.

24. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 22, wherein the overloaded key is a Clear/Back key that supports a clear function and a back function.

25. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 22, wherein the overloaded key is a Back/Exit key that supports a back function and an exit function.

26. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 22, wherein the mobile device is a personal digital assistant or a cellular phone.

27. A mobile device, comprising:

a display configured to display text entered by a user;

a keypad to facilitate text entry by the user, said keypad including at least an overloaded key that serves a plurality of functions;

a buffer for storing key presses entered by the user via said keypad; and

a processor configured to control operation of said mobile device, said processor being configured to provide context sensitive processing of overloaded key presses by operating to receive a key press of the overloaded

key to be processed from said buffer, determine whether the function of the overloaded key has just switched, and clear any subsequent overloaded key presses of the overloaded key from said buffer when it is determined that the function of the overloaded key has just switched.

28. A mobile device as recited in claim 27, wherein said processor further operates to set a pause period for the overloaded key when it is determined that the function of the overloaded key has just switched so that subsequent presses of the overloaded key are ignored during the pause period.

29. A mobile device as recited in claim 28, wherein said processor further operates to determine whether the overload key press occurred during the pause period, and process the overloaded key press when it is determined that the overloaded key press did not occur during the pause period.

30. A mobile device as recited in claim 27, wherein the mobile device is a mobile telephone.

31. A computer readable medium including at least computer program code for processing a multi-function key on a mobile device, said computer readable medium comprising:

computer program code for receiving a key press of the multi-function key to be processed;

computer program code for determining whether the function of the multi-function key has changed since last pressed; and

computer program code for determining whether to ignore the key press of the multi-function key or to process the key press of the multi-function key press with the function being changed.